

Issue 21
Summer 2012

On Station

News from the Hamilton Volunteer Operational Support crew

FIRE



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Cover picture: Daybreak at a Frankton 3rd alarm storage unit fire in October. FF Danny Sparrow is on his way to take down our Powermoon floodlights which had been used to illuminate the fireground during the night.

What it's all About (The Fine Print)

On Station (previously called *HamVol Happenings*) is the newsletter of the Hamilton Volunteer Fire Brigade. It's produced quarterly and sometimes more often as required.

The Hamilton VFB is the only volunteer component within the Hamilton Fire District and is on call 24/7 to provide Operational Support to Hamilton's career firefighters and all volunteer brigades throughout the Waikato Fire Area. Our services typically include:

- Incident lighting
- Heavy duty salvage
- Storm/natural disaster relief
- Urban Search & Rescue assistance
- Resource pooling/logistics
- Scene protection
- Command Unit assistance
- All-round extra hands

For other brigades:

To respond us simply radio FireComm with an assistance message "Attach Hamilton Volunteers for (state requirement)".

Note: Hamilton paid crews or Area Management don't need to be in attendance for us to respond.

For public & non-emergency enquiries:

Please contact the appropriate person below.

Brigade Officer in Charge:
SO Craig Meads, 027 455 7213

Brigade 2IC & Recruiting:
SO Andrew McOnie, 021 145 0416

Training & Promotions:
SFF George McQuillan, 027 442 3004

Or visit www.freewebs.com/hvesc

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Long Haul for Rural Fire Course

Bright and early on Sunday December 4th (though the few hardy souls who made the most of our Christmas Dinner the night before may not have been so bright), two-thirds of the brigade embarked from station on a trip across the Kamai Ranges to TECT Park, off State Highway 36 in the Bay of Plenty. The purpose of the trip was for members to complete their rural firefighting training, which was originally scheduled to take place in Morrinsville combined with members of other brigades but in the end ours were the only people to enrol. Thankfully rather than having the course cancelled outright, the training provider Training in Action were able to relocate to their "home" venue and host the course just for us.

Rural fires – being fires in scrub, grass, bush, forest etc. – are significantly different from fires in buildings, both in terms of fire behaviour and the type of equipment used to control them. Although extinguishing fires is not a prime role for Operational Support personnel, all New Zealand Fire Service personnel must be aware of and meet the standards laid out by the National Rural Fire Authority if/when working at a rural fire incident; Namely having achieved, or be under the supervision of someone who has achieved Unit Standard 3285; Protecting Personal Safety at Rural Fires. The same course that awards this unit standard also delivers unit standards in using water and dry firefighting techniques at rural fires so as many of our people who could make it were enrolled on the course.

Park Ranger Jarron McInnes was our tutor and provided a much enjoyed learning experience, enlivening the morning theory elements with real life stories from his lengthy forestry career. Practical scenarios in the afternoon required a bit of imagination stretching as the weather turned to absolute custard so we just had to pretend the trees and bushes with rain pouring off them were blazing away while we dug firelines and ran up the Wajax pump! For personnel who already had rural fire experience the course was a fantastic refresher, while for people who hadn't yet been exposed to this aspect of firefighting it was a great learning curve and reinforced the safety messages previously passed on in-house.



Clockwise from above: The compulsory post-course pose! In front of TECT Park's own appliance; Paying close attention to Jarron's instructions; Andy priming the Wajax pump. All photo's courtesy Jarron McInnes.



Please Allow Us to Introduce...

Over the next few issues we'll be introducing our brigade members to you, two at a time. We hope you enjoy finding out a little bit about who your volunteers are and what makes us tick.

Carolyn Rosewarne



Rank: Qualified Fire Fighter (QFF)
A.K.A: "Caz" or "Caro"
Watch: Blue
Length of Service: 4 years
Time in this Brigade: 4 years
Portfolio/s: Secretary, Treasurer

Where do you consider to be your home town? *Wherever home is.*

What's your favourite music or band/musician? *Really just anybody who can actually sing! Amazing voices blow me away.*

Who's your greatest influence in life and why? *Mum and Dad. Mum for her unconditional faith, love and kindness. Dad for his wisdom, guidance, knowledge and faith.*

What do you enjoy most about being in the brigade? *Helping people, the community involvement and comradeship. Also learning new skills and stepping outside my comfort zone - love a challenge!!*

What's your day job and what does it involve? *Co-owner/office manager of Pro Steel Engineering Ltd & Profiling Ltd - heavy machinery engineering.*

When you're not at work or doing fire things what are you most likely to be found doing? *Horse riding, at the kids sports, driving hot rods or laxing at Whangamata..*

What do you currently drive and if you could change it, what would you get? *Holden Commodore and a 1934 Ford Roadster (still wear my Holden jacket though!!). Wouldn't swap my Roadster for anything!*

What's your ideal get-away/holiday? *Whangamata or USA.*

What TV/movie/book character would you most relate yourself to and why? *Bridget Jones - see below.*

What's the most embarrassing thing you've done during your time so far? *Not reading my pager properly, just seeing "Train" instead of "B Train", as in truck & trailer. Having had to respond in my own car I only later realised I wouldn't find this overturned B Train by following the train tracks!! After telling my confidential story to the wrong person, at my next job I was greeted by the entire permanent crew serenading me with "Do the locomotion"! [Love ya work Gunna -Ed.]*

What are you most looking forward to in your future with the Fire Service? *Learning and perfecting new skills sets, plus more in-community work.*

Karl Johnson



Rank: Senior Fire Fighter (SFF)
A.K.A: "KJ"
Watch: Blue
Length of Service: 11 years
Time in this Brigade: 4 years
Portfolio/s: Assistant Trainer, Fundraising Guru

Where do you consider to be your home town? *Christchurch (GO THE CRUSADERS!!)*

What's your favourite music or band/musician? *U2 are absolutely my no.1.*

Who's your greatest influence in life and why? *My mum, for raising me and my sister on her own, and my wife Rachel, for being the most amazing wife and mum.*

What do you enjoy most about being in the brigade? *The comradeship of my fellow firefighters and being able to help others.*

What's your day job and what does it involve? *Turf manager, Seddon Park and Waikato Stadium.*

When you're not at work or doing fire things what are you most likely to be found doing? *Hanging out with my wife Rachel and son Zach. Love being around people.*

What do you currently drive and if you could change it, what would you get? *My work Mazda BT50 ute. I'd love to own a Mazda RX3 coupe or Porsche 911.*

What's your ideal get-away/holiday? *Anywhere away from all the emails and phone calls I get!!!*

What TV/movie/book character would you most relate yourself to and why? *Bear Grylls from Man vs. Wild. The way he just gets on and does things, not just talking about doing them.*

What are you most looking forward to in your future with the Fire Service? *Hopefully being able to add some good value to the team.*

Is there anything else that people would be surprised to know about you? *I make a mean blueberry cheesecake!*

Adieu, to You and You

In December we sadly bid farewell to two brigade members. Great pride was taken in being able to award Stephanie Toft her 5 year medal just before she moved to Melbourne, with all her service earned in Hamilton. Donald Hidden was unfortunately unable to stay with our brigade but continues his fire involvement through his day job as a Rescue Firefighter at the airport. Although there are now two open positions please be aware we are **not** calling for recruitment applications, as we will be interviewing people already on the waiting list which currently numbers at over 70.

STOP PRESS: AMAZING FUNDRAISING EVENT CONFIRMED!

Just as we were about to print, word was received iconic Hood Street bar **Rodeo Rodeo** will be hosting a big fundraising night for the Hamilton Volunteers on **Thursday, February 23rd**. Come on in and join the crew (it is a bar so R18) for a whole range of challenging – and hilarious – fire themed games, competitions and special auctions. There'll even be some special celebrity guests we're sure you won't want to miss; especially firefighters calendar fans... First event kicks off at 7pm – see you there!

2011 Brigade Awards

In 2010 Officer in Charge SO Craig Meads commissioned and donated to the brigade three new trophies to be presented as annual awards, recognising outstanding service to the brigade in the preceding year. Similar awards had been presented in the past when we provided full firefighting capabilities but had dropped off the radar with the change to Operational Support services. Congratulations go to 2011's recipients:

Chief's Award: Joint recipients SO Andrew McOnie and SFF Karl Johnson

In recognition of outstanding fundraising efforts carried out during the year, leading to success in obtaining sufficient funds to commence construction of the Emergency Lighting Plant.

Commitment Award: QFF Daryl Lyes

In recognition of obtaining the highest attendance to brigade musters.

Fireman of the Year Award: SFF George McQuillan

In recognition of overall dedication to the brigade, particularly in carrying out duties as Training Officer.

2011 Callout Summary

We finished the year with our lowest callout rate since picking up the Operational Support role in 2007 – a total of 41 calls. Compare this with 59 for 2010 which has been our highest year so far and we certainly seem to be on track for achieving the 40 to 60 calls a year anticipated at the time of changeover.

November and December combined saw us respond to 8 calls, 4 specifically for salvage, 3 for lighting and 1 where we were stood down en route. The last two calls of the year were noteworthy for both being large salvage/dewatering operations over multiple levels in commercial premises within the Hamilton CBD. These were both as a result of sprinkler systems being accidentally ruptured. No calls have been received for 2012 at the time of printing but the crew were happy to not have received a just-on-midnight New Years Eve callout which has been the norm recently!

Congratulations Team: Multiple More ELP Stages Completed!

Simply amazing progress has been carried out on our second appliance/Emergency Lighting Plant project since the last edition of *On Station*. Not only has the new driveshaft been fabricated, fitted and certified but the locker body has been built, painting of the entire appliance completed, Fire Service graphics and all new top of the line flashing lights fitted! Phew!

That's not to say there haven't been a few bumps along the road; The entire locker body had to undergo a slight redesign to rectify some safety issues and there were some unexpected GST add-ons. This led to a minor shortfall in funds but thanks to some forward thinking and rapid fundraising applications we were able to cover this by securing a \$12,500 grant from WEL Energy Trust – who we take the opportunity to sincerely thank.

As you can see below, the appliance is structurally complete and certainly looks the part. The next step is to install seat belts in the back row (which for some reason had previously been removed) as this is the only remaining requirement for the vehicle to obtain a Certificate of Fitness. Once it has a valid CoF, qualified drivers will be able to commence familiarisation driving – very necessary considering the huge difference in size and performance from the current appliance. From there the appliance will just need equipment fitted, locker layouts finalised and a few finishing touches before being commissioned.



Thank you to the major sponsors of our Emergency Lighting Plant project:

